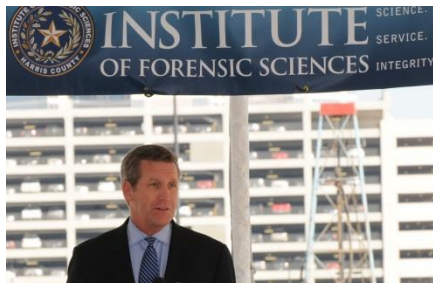


## Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences breaks ground on new forensic facility

By Shea Connelly  
October 24, 2014

With a few ceremonial shovels-full of earth, Oct. 22 marked the official groundbreaking of a massive construction project in the heart of the Texas Medical Center: the new Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences (HCIFS) building. Just off the Old Spanish Trail, the 200,000-square-foot, nine-story tower will house a host of clinical, laboratory, administrative and training spaces.



**William F. McKeon, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Texas Medical Center, offers remarks at the groundbreaking.**

“Today we celebrate not just the construction of the building, but the work that will be housed here and those dedicated to the role of sound scientific evidence in the pursuit of justice,” said Luis A. Sanchez, M.D., HCIFS executive director and chief medical examiner.

This construction project has been a vision for years and was officially set in motion in 2007, when the citizens of Harris County voted in favor of a bond to fund the facility. “Harris County has shown leadership and vision through their support of this project,” said Sanchez. “The result will be a well-designed, safe and secure facility where we will provide valid, reliable and compassionate forensic services to our community.”

The new forensic facility is set to feature space for a wealth of forensic expertise, including pathology, investigation, anthropology, entomology, emergency management, morgue services, trace evidence analysis and much more, as well as consultation and conference rooms to host meetings between family members, attorneys and law enforcement and an auditorium that will seat over 200.

“We’ll provide world-class training and mentorship and conduct research in partnership with the Texas Medical Center—we are so proud to be a member institution,” said Sanchez. “Without a doubt, the impact of the work performed in this new building will transcend its walls, touching the lives of many families in Harris County and beyond.”

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**Shovels in hand, officials wait to break ground at the site of the new Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences (HCIFS) facility.**



**Harris County Judge Ed Emmett serves as master of ceremonies.**



**Artist rendering of the future Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences building.**

The state-of-the-art, 3.2-acre site is expected to be completed in early 2017.

“This will be a cornerstone of the research in the medical center for years to come,” said William F. McKeon, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Texas Medical Center. “We couldn’t be more proud to have you as a key element of the Texas Medical Center.”

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